

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for the repositioning or removal of a luminal stent, the method comprising:

modifying a luminal stent prior to insertion in a tissue, by adding a tightening drawstring through one or both termini of the stent, wherein said drawstring is slack during normal use of the stent;

repositioning or removing said stent by the method of:

grasping said drawstring with a grasping element of a stent removal device;

withdrawing said grasping element into a protective sheath or over tube, thereby tightening said drawstring and decreasing the circumference of said stent;

withdrawing said stent at least partially into said protective sheath or over tube in order to reposition within said tissue or to remove from said tissue;

withdrawing said stent removal device.

2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said luminal stent is inserted in the gastrointestinal tract.

3. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said stent removal device is housed with an endoscope.

4. The method according to Claim 3, wherein an over tube is provided to cover said endoscope, and wherein said stent is withdrawn into said over tube.

5. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said stent is a metallic, self-expanding stent.

6. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said tightening drawstring is a nylon filament.

7. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said tightening drawstring is threaded through the wires of said stent at one terminus.

8. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said tightening drawstring is threaded through the wires through at part of the length of the stent.

9. The method according to Claim 1, wherein said tightening drawstring is threaded through eyelets provided on the terminus of the stent.

10. A stent removal system, the system comprising:

a luminal stent comprising a tightening drawstring through one or both termini of the stent, wherein said drawstring is slack during normal use of the stent;

a stent removal device, comprising a flexible elongate member with proximal and distal ends, a grasping member at the distal end, and a manual means for actuating the grasping member at the proximal end of the device.

11. The system according to Claim 10, wherein said stent removal device comprises a protective sheath over said elongate member.

12. The system according to Claim 10, wherein said stent removal device further comprises an endoscope, and a protective over tube.

13. The system according to Claim 10, wherein said stent is a metallic, self-expanding stent.

14. The system according to Claim 13, wherein said stent is suitable for gastrointestinal use.

15. The system according to Claim 10, wherein said tightening drawstring is a nylon filament.

16. The system according to Claim 10, wherein said tightening drawstring is threaded through the wires of said stent at one terminus.

17. The system according to Claim 10, wherein said tightening drawstring is threaded through the wires through at part of the length of the stent.

18. The system according to Claim 10, wherein said tightening drawstring is threaded through eyelets provided on the terminus of the stent.